

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 163

**Introduced by Assembly Members Cook, Pan, Butler, and
John A. Pérez
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Bonilla)**

June 25, 2012

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 163—Relative to the 25th anniversary of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 163, as introduced, Cook. California Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

This measure would recognize the 25th anniversary of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial on November 23, 2013, and encourage all Californians to take part in ceremonies, organized by the California State Council of Vietnam Veterans of America along with assistance from the Department of Veterans Affairs and other veterans service organizations. This measure would call upon the state archives to display memorabilia in a special display created by the California State Military Museum and would also call upon the Department of Veterans Affairs to add names to the memorial, as provided.

Fiscal committee: yes.

- 1 WHEREAS, California has the largest United States veterans'
- 2 population in the nation, comprising approximately 2 million armed
- 3 services veterans, which is 12.3 percent of the nationwide veteran
- 4 population of nearly 25 million veterans, who represent
- 5 approximately one-fifth of California's total population; and

1 WHEREAS, More than 350,000 California veterans served in
2 Vietnam, resulting in 5,822 of them being killed or missing in
3 action, which comprised more than 10 percent of the nation's total,
4 and 40,000 of them being wounded; and

5 WHEREAS, More California residents died in Vietnam than
6 residents of any other state and California veterans received more
7 Medals of Honor, Bronze Stars, and Purple Hearts than veterans
8 of any other state; and

9 WHEREAS, The history of the California Vietnam Veterans
10 Memorial began when Herman Woods, a double amputee who
11 served in the 1st Air Cavalry Division, United States Army (1970),
12 returned to California from the dedication of the National Vietnam
13 Veterans Memorial in our nation's capitol, Washington, D.C. in
14 1982; and

15 WHEREAS, Assembly Member Richard Floyd subsequently
16 held a rally on the steps of the State Capitol, and over 800 people
17 attended; he was convinced that construction of the California
18 Vietnam Veterans Memorial was the will of California Vietnam
19 veterans; and

20 WHEREAS, Assembly Member Richard Floyd introduced
21 Assembly Bill 650, which created the California Vietnam Veterans
22 Memorial in Capitol Park, that was signed into law by Governor
23 Deukmejian in September 1983; and

24 WHEREAS, The newly formed Vietnam Veterans Memorial
25 Commission was comprised of nine veterans, eight of whom served
26 in Vietnam, including Linda J. McClenahan, Chairperson, Leo K.
27 Thorsness, Medal of Honor recipient and Vice Chairperson, and
28 members Gregory C. Green, Treasurer, Abel A. Cota, Secretary,
29 B.T. Collins, Don A. Drumheller, Jesse G. Ugalde, Senator Jim
30 Ellis, Assembly Member Richard E. Floyd, member and author
31 of Assembly Bill 650, and Jerri L. Dale, Executive Officer, which
32 led to the creation of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial;
33 and

34 WHEREAS, The California Vietnam Veterans Memorial is
35 located in the north-east section of the Capitol Park grounds of the
36 State Capitol and is a standing tribute to the 5,822 servicemen and
37 servicewomen killed and missing in action; and

38 WHEREAS, The California Vietnam Veterans Memorial was
39 dedicated on December 10, 1988, in Capitol Park; and there were
40 thousands in attendance at the dedication ceremonies where

1 Brigadier General George B. Price was the keynote speaker at the
2 dedication; and the dedication events were spread out over a
3 two-day period, commencing with “Buddy Search” registrations,
4 unit reunions, open houses, and concluding with the dedication
5 ceremony in Capitol Park; and

6 WHEREAS, The theme of the memorial reflects the
7 overwhelming majority of those who were killed in Vietnam,
8 including 19-year old infantry soldiers, their youth, camaraderie,
9 the fatigue of the war, and the American women who served, with
10 the winning entry in the opening design competition awarded to
11 Michael Larson, a Marine Corps Vietnam veteran, and Thomas
12 Chytrowski; and

13 WHEREAS, B.T. Collins and Stan Atkinson, who had traveled
14 to Vietnam together after the war, undertook the mission of raising
15 the necessary funds to complete the memorial; and

16 WHEREAS, The California State Council of Vietnam Veterans
17 of America will be the organizer of this event as they were for the
18 2008 20th anniversary event; and

19 WHEREAS, all California components of veterans service
20 organizations will be participating in this historic event; now,
21 therefore, be it

22 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
23 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature hereby commemorates
24 2013 as the 25-year anniversary of the California Vietnam Veterans
25 Memorial, encourages all Californians to take part in the
26 ceremonies commemorating the 25-year anniversary, to be held
27 on November 23, 2013, including opening ceremonies; and be it
28 further

29 *Resolved*, That the Legislature urges that all steps necessary to
30 inform all Californians of the date of these ceremonies and
31 locations of these events be taken so that all Californians may have
32 the opportunity to remember and honor the service, efforts, and
33 sacrifices of Vietnam veterans, and to pay homage to those veterans
34 who are still alive; and be it further

35 *Resolved*, That the Department of Veterans Affairs and all state
36 agencies should assist in informing Californians and provide
37 assistance to the organizers of the 25th anniversary commemoration
38 event; and be it further

39 *Resolved*, That the state archives display memorabilia left at the
40 Vietnam Veterans Memorial when the memorial was dedicated,

1 which was deposited in the state archives, in a special display for
2 2013 on the Vietnam War created by the California State Military
3 Museum; and be it further

4 *Resolved*, That the Department of Veterans Affairs should
5 establish a task force to compile a list of California servicemen
6 and servicewomen whose names may not be currently listed on
7 the memorial so that they can be added to the memorial; and be it
8 further

9 *Resolved*, That names should be added to the memorial of
10 California Vietnam veterans whose passing since their service in
11 Vietnam can reasonably be attributed to their wartime service,
12 based upon recommendations from interested parties; and be it
13 further

14 *Resolved*, That the Legislature calls upon the Governor to issue
15 a proclamation on November 23, 2013, commemorating the 25th
16 anniversary of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial; and be
17 it further

18 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
19 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.